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# EngageSDG
















## A Participatory Approach to Sustainable Development in Local Communities

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# Presentation Overview



What we will cover today

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>01</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Context &amp; Problem Statement</b><br/>           Why SDG awareness in local communities matters         </div> | <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>04</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Outcomes &amp; Products</b><br/>           What participants produced         </div>           |
| <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>02</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Workshop Design</b><br/>           Participatory methodology and framework         </div>                        | <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>05</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Evaluation &amp; Feedback</b><br/>           Evidence of impact         </div>                 |
| <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>03</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Values &amp; Alignment</b><br/>           Connecting organisational culture to global priorities         </div>  | <div style="background-color: #2c3e50; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>06</b></div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <b>Way Forward</b><br/>           Next steps and implications for higher education         </div> |

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## Context & Problem Statement

The gap between global goals and local communities

### The Challenge

- Community organisations often work in alignment with the SDGs without knowing it
- Lack of SDG literacy limits access to funding, partnerships and policy influence
- Top-down SDG communication fails to connect with lived community realities
- Higher education institutions have a mandate for community engagement (CE) as co-creation, not outreach

### Research Aim

To examine the experiences of community organisations, postgraduate students and academics as facilitators of community engagement initiatives, and identify lessons for embedding co-creation as a transformative practice within higher education.

### Theoretical Framework

Cynefin Framework (Snowden & Boone, 2007) — a sense-making tool that categorises challenges into simple, complicated, complex, and chaotic domains. Particularly suited to CE because it promotes probing, learning and adapting rather than imposing pre-determined solutions.

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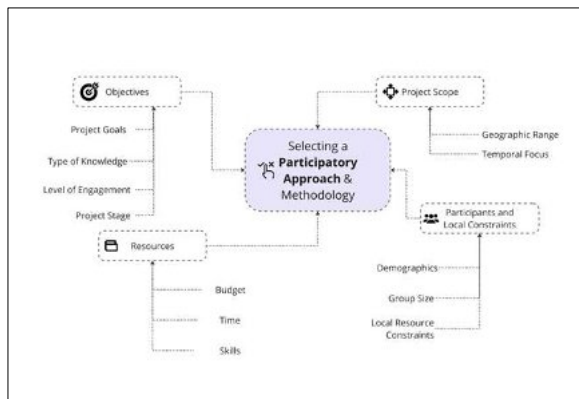
## Integrated Participatory Framework



Integrated  
**Participatory**  
Framework

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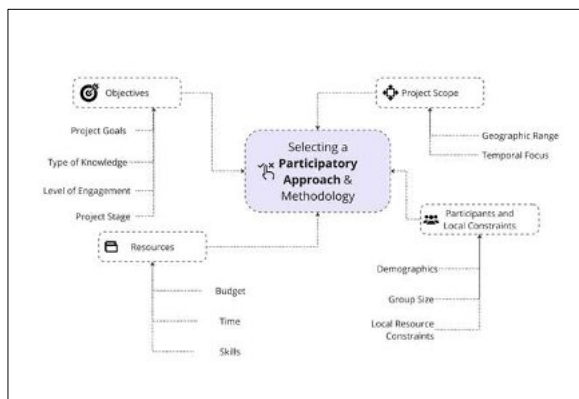
# Integrated Participatory Framework: Participatory Action research



Project Goals: To help the community organizations understand how their work links to national and international priorities including SDGs. **The participants are engaged to understand from their experience. This, combined with theoretical knowledge, creates new knowledge which is then shared within and outside the community.**

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# Integrated Participatory Framework: Participatory Action research



Desired Knowledge: Was obtained through different activities

1. Preworkshop evaluation
2. Values exercise
3. Alignment to national and international priorities
4. Capability approach
5. Postworkshop evaluation

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# Workshop Design & Methodology



A full-day participatory co-creation session

| Time          | Session                                   | Facilitator(s)                      |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 09:00 – 09:45 | Welcome & Statement of Purpose            | Prof Retha Bloem / Prof Jose Frantz |
| 09:45 – 10:45 | Values Cards: Personal & Organisational   | Tamara, Monique, Jamie & Carin      |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | National & International SDG Priorities   | Pearl                               |
| 10:45 – 11:45 | Activity: Aligning work to SDGs           | Lumka & Pearl                       |
| 11:45 – 12:30 | Capability Cards: Barriers & Facilitators | Prof Frantz & Kago                  |
| 13:30 – 14:30 | Feedback & Reflection                     | Prof Frantz                         |
| 14:30 – 15:00 | The Way Forward                           | Prof Frantz                         |

*Participants: Community-based organisations in the Wellington/Paarl district, Western Cape, South Africa*

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## Session 1 of workshop: Values

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# PACKS USED DURING THE WORKSHOP



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## Step 1: Clarifying Values



What values do you live by and what values drive your organisation's work?

*"A value is a way of being or believing that we hold most important. Living into our values means we do more than profess them — we practice them."*

— Brené Brown



*Key insight: Strong alignment between personal values (service, integrity) and organisational culture — a foundation for SDG engagement.*

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## Step 1: Clarifying Values

What values drive your organisation's work?



### Process

Identify personal values

Identify organizational values

Identify collective values



Key insight: Strong alignment between personal values (service, integrity) and organisational culture — a foundation for SDG engagement.

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## Step 1: Clarifying Values

What values drive your organisation's work?

*"A value is a way of being or believing that we hold most important. Living into our values means we do more than profess them — we practice them."*

— Brené Brown

### Personal Values Identified

Family

Service to others

Intimate relationships & God

Integrity

Love

### Organisational Values Identified

Integrity

Spirituality

Meaningful work

Ethical practice

Service to others

Key insight: Strong alignment between personal values (service, integrity) and organisational culture — a foundation for SDG engagement.

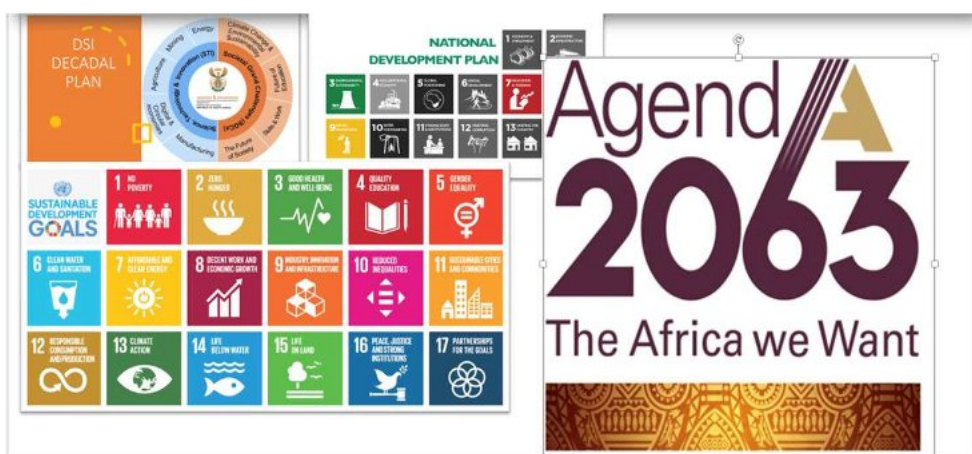
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# Session 2: Aligning work to national and international priorities

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## Step 2: Aligning Work to National & Global Priorities

Mapping organisational activities onto the SDG framework



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## Step 2: Aligning Work to National & Global Priorities

Mapping organisational activities onto the SDG framework

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### Strategic Frameworks Referenced

|                                                        |                                                                    |                                                                   |                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>UN SDGs</b><br><br>17 Global Goals<br>(2030 Agenda) | <b>NDP 2030</b><br><br>South Africa's<br>National Development Plan | <b>Agenda 2063</b><br><br>African Union's<br>'The Africa We Want' | <b>DSI Decadal Plan</b><br><br>Science & Technology<br>Innovation |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|

### SDGs Most Frequently Identified by Participants

|                                |                                       |                                     |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>SDG 1</b><br><br>No Poverty | <b>SDG 4</b><br><br>Quality Education | <b>SDG 5</b><br><br>Gender Equality | <b>SDG 16</b><br><br>Peace & Justice | <b>SDG 17</b><br><br>Partnerships |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

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# Session 3: Barriers and facilitators to doing your work: Capability Approach

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## Step 3: Barriers & Facilitators

Using Capability Cards to surface what enables and blocks SDG action



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## Step 3: Barriers & Facilitators

Using Capability Cards to surface what enables and blocks SDG action

### — Barriers

- Governance & accountability gaps
- Insecurity & lack of confidence
- Identity & self-determination tensions
- Working conditions & capacity constraints
- Limited access to information

### ✓ Facilitators

- Inclusivity & community belonging
- Resilience & adaptive capacity
- Recognition & feedback mechanisms
- Equity & access to resources
- Expertise & knowledge sharing

*Key finding: Participants readily identified both enablers and blockers once given shared vocabulary — evidence that the Capability Card tool builds critical SDG consciousness.*

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## Step 3: Barriers & Facilitators

Using Capability Cards to surface what enables and blocks SDG action and sharing their story



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## Session 4: Feedback and how do we move forward

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Workshop Feedback

*"I learnt how to align my institution's projects and goals more directly to the SDG's and other national/international policies"*

*"I have a new/renewed vision and energy, knowing where we fit in"*

*Different people/organisations but everyone has same/or mostly the same values and goals which makes it easy to contact and build relationships to make a difference*

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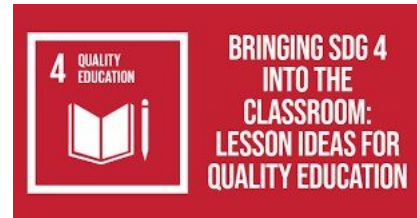
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# Session 5: Practical solution to problems identified

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## Step 4: OUTCOMES

Practical solution to a challenge identified



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## Outcomes: SDG-Linked Children's Storybooks

Bringing SDG 4 into the classroom — early childhood education products



**SDG 3**

Good Health  
& Well-being



**SDG 14**

Life Below  
Water



**SDG 15**

Life  
On Land

Produced by the research team in partnership with EngageSDG, UWC Research & Innovation, and the JMF. Illustrations enhanced using AI image-generation tools (ChatGPT/OpenAI, Gemini/Google DeepMind). ISBN 978-1-0672070-5-2

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# THE LINKS

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/eafe191d5a.html>

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/83ee5042e1.html>

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/14eef2db54.html>

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## Evaluation & Teacher Feedback

Evidence of classroom impact — SDG 3, 14 & 15 storybooks

### Evaluation Approach

- Google Forms review tool sent to early childhood teachers
- Teachers asked to read books to learners and report responses
- Focus: learner engagement, SDG concept uptake, curriculum integration
- Aligned to SDG Targets 4.2 (pre-primary) and 4.6 (literacy & numeracy)

Key finding: Books enabled learner-led dialogue connecting SDG concepts to real-life experience — demonstrating age-appropriate SDG literacy is achievable.

*"They were intrigued by the pictures and participated well in the teacher-guided discussions."*

— ECD Teacher, Wellington

*"They connected the topic to prior events — like what mommy cooks, or whether they've seen sea creatures in real life."*

— ECD Teacher, Wellington

*"When doing discussions learners would bring up related topics and I would engage and ask questions."*

— ECD Teacher, Wellington

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# DISSEMINATION



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## The Way Forward

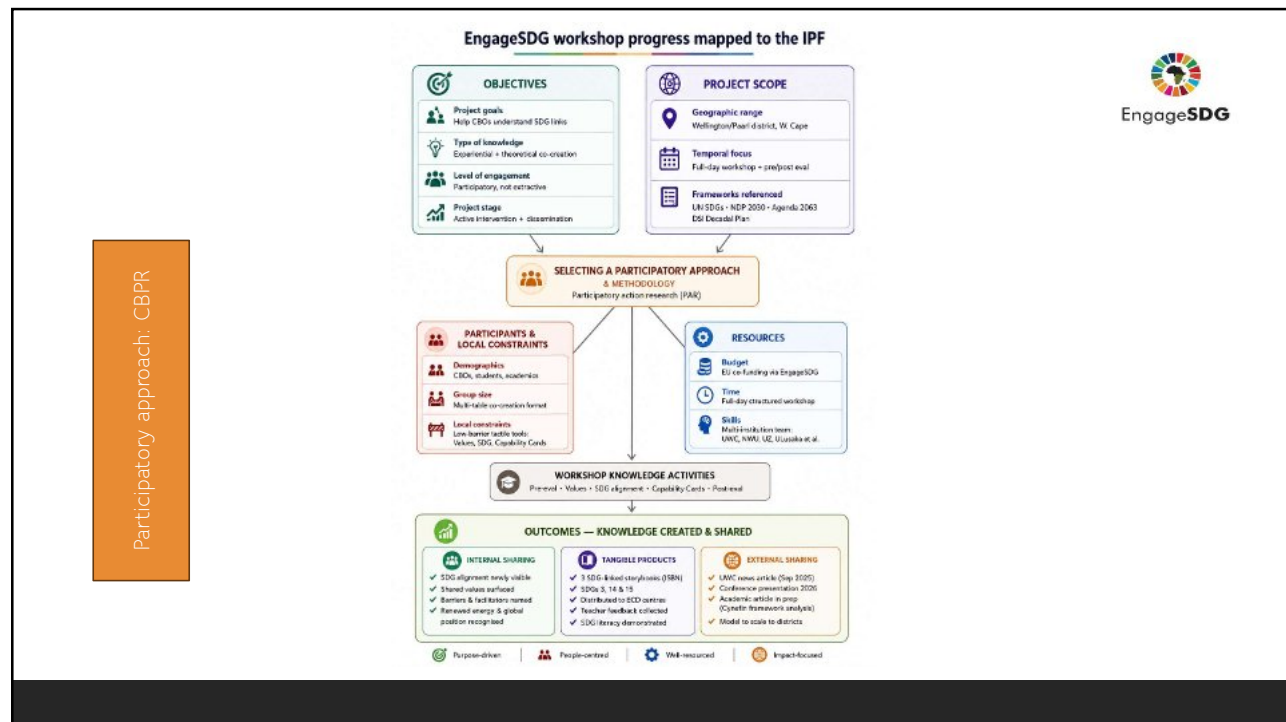


Implications for community engagement and higher education

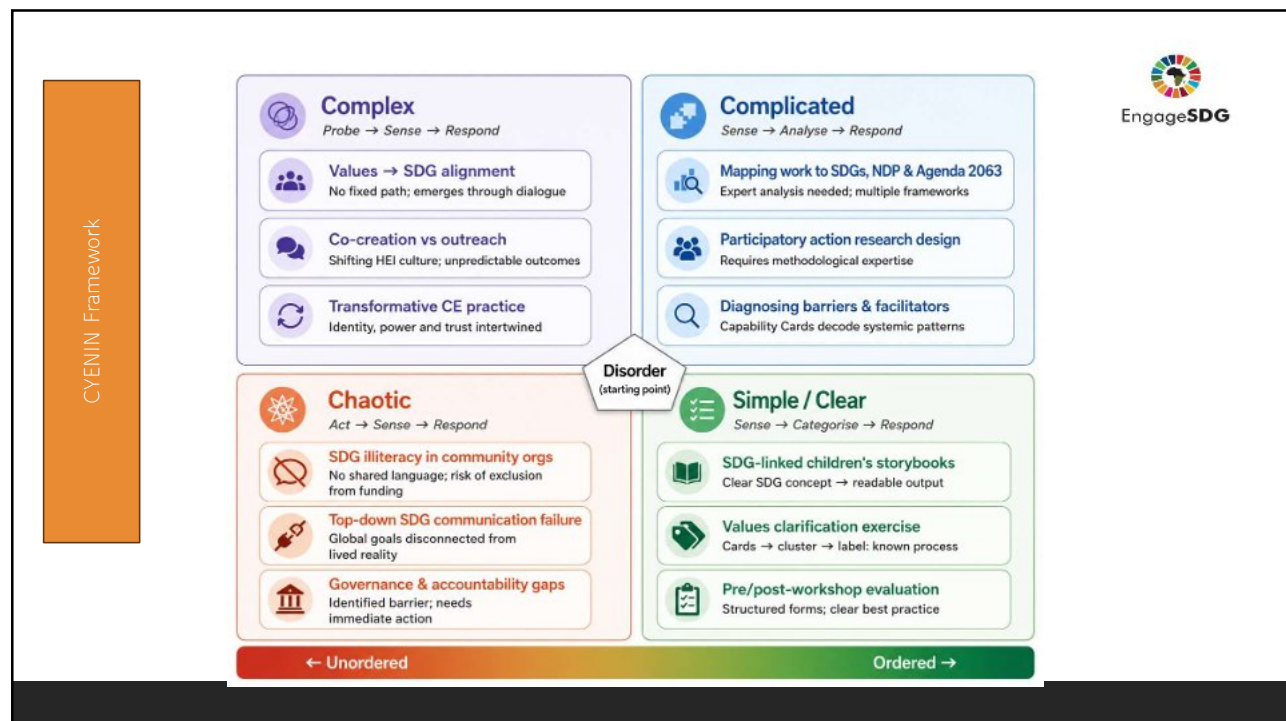
| For Researchers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | For Higher Education                                                                                                                                                                                                                | For Communities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish Cynefin framework analysis (article in preparation)</li> <li>Scale the workshop model to additional community districts</li> <li>Conduct longitudinal follow-up with participating organisations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed CE co-creation workshops in postgraduate curricula</li> <li>Use Capability Cards as a standard CE facilitation tool</li> <li>Formalise UWC–community partnership structures</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute storybooks to ECD centres across Western Cape</li> <li>Train community facilitators to run SDG mapping sessions</li> <li>Connect aligned organisations to SDG funding streams</li> <li>Partner with an organization to include numeracy</li> </ul> |

This work demonstrates that community-driven SDG engagement, anchored in values and facilitated through participatory methods, is both scalable and academically rigorous.

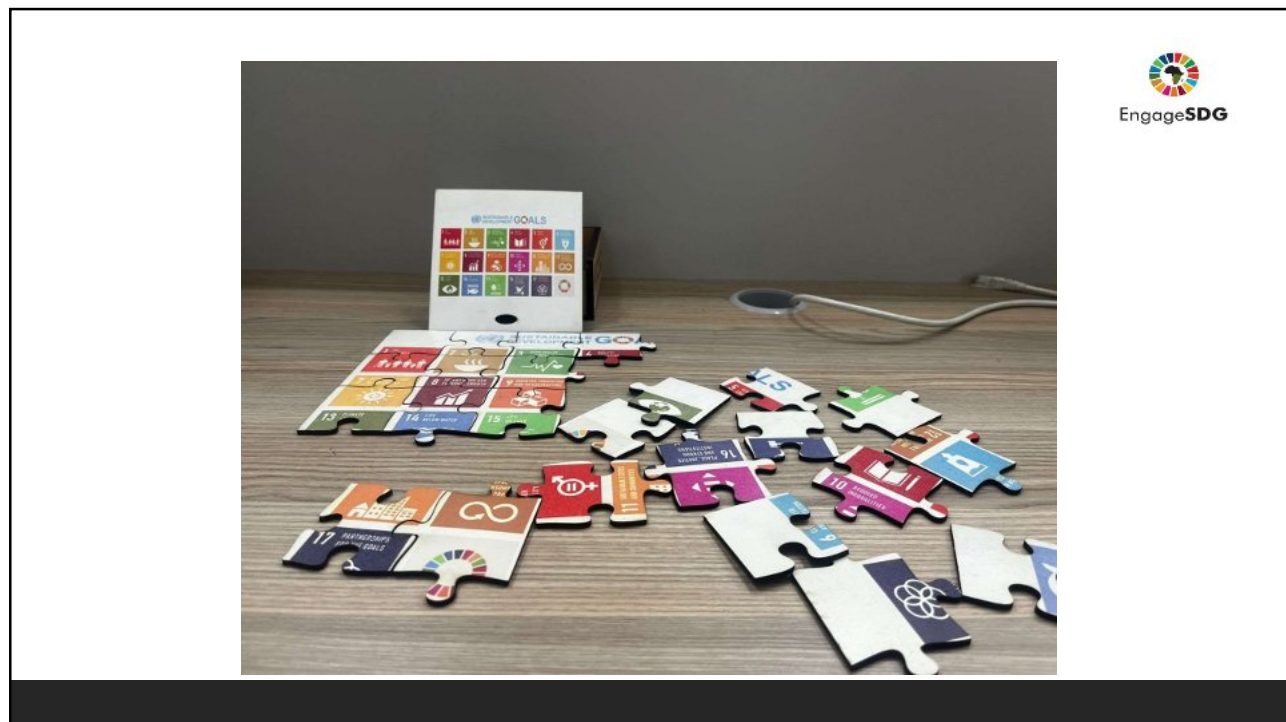
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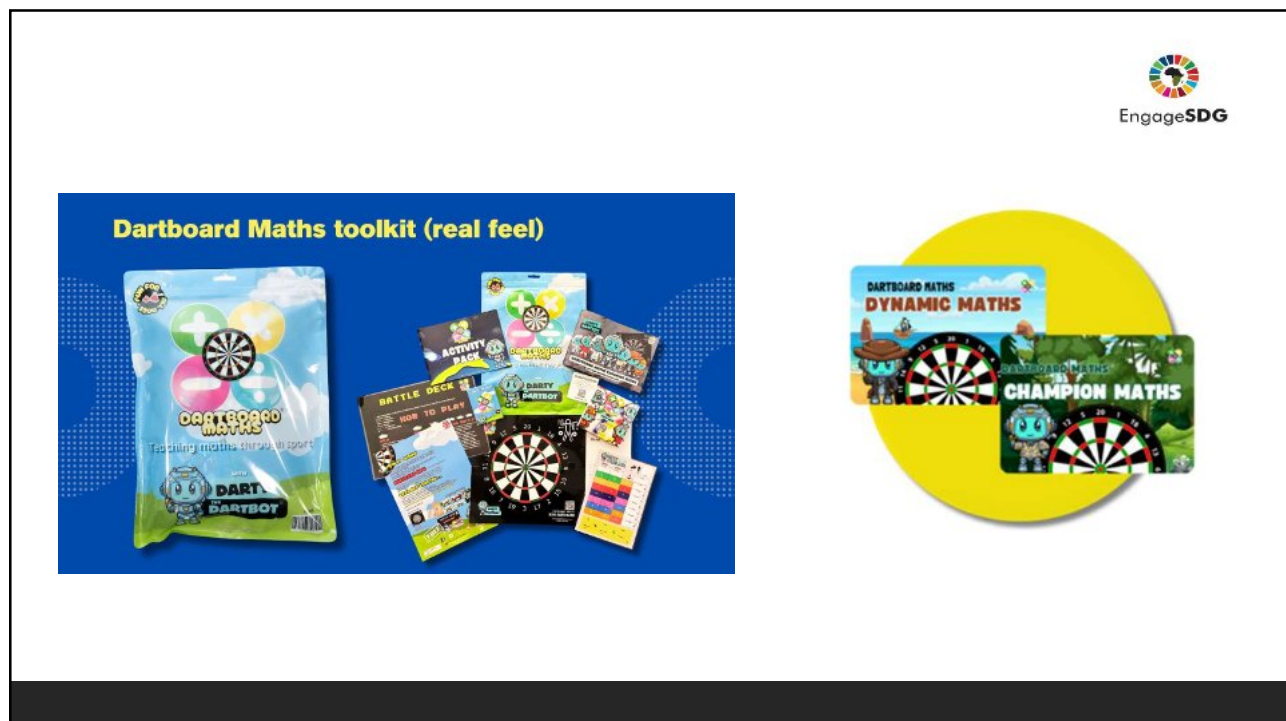
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THANK YOU

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